

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend claim 85 and add new claims 94-96 as follows:

Listing of Claims:

1-84. (Cancelled)

85. (Currently Amended) A method for controlling conditioning of a continuous planarizing medium used for planarizing a microelectronic substrate, the method comprising:

positioning the continuous planarizing pad around a pair of spaced apart rollers to define a first planarization station and an opposing second planarization station;

engaging a conditioning body with the continuous planarizing pad proximate to at least one of the first planarization station and the opposing second planarization station and moving at least one of the conditioning body and the continuous planarizing medium relative to the other while the conditioning body contacts the continuous planarizing medium, wherein the conditioning body is coupled to a first support member for supporting the conditioning body on the planarizing pad;

detecting a frictional force between the conditioning body and the continuous planarizing medium by the first support member moving responsive to the frictional force, the moving of the first support member transmitting a force to a force sensor; and

controlling at least one of a force between the conditioning body and the continuous planarizing medium and a speed of the conditioning body relative to the continuous planarizing medium in response to detecting the frictional force between the conditioning body and the planarizing medium.

86. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein at least one of a force between the conditioning body and the continuous planarizing medium comprises receiving a first signal corresponding to the frictional force and transmitting a second signal to an actuator coupled to the conditioning body.

87. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 86, wherein receiving the first signal comprises receiving the first signal with a microprocessor and wherein transmitting the second signal comprises transmitting the second signal from the microprocessor.

88. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein controlling at least one of a force between the conditioning body and the continuous planarizing medium comprises applying a force to the conditioning body that is approximately normal to a planarizing surface of the planarizing medium.

89. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein controlling a speed of the conditioning body relative to the continuous planarizing medium further comprises controlling a rotational speed of the spaced apart rollers.

90. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein positioning the continuous planarizing pad around a pair of spaced apart rollers further comprises supporting the continuous planarizing pad with a continuous support band.

91. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 85, wherein positioning the continuous planarizing pad around a pair of spaced apart rollers further comprises positioning a first platen proximate to the first planarization station and positioning a second platen proximate to the second planarization station.

92. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 91, wherein positioning the continuous planarizing pad around a pair of spaced apart rollers further comprises positioning a first carrier supporting a first substrate adjacent to the first platen and positioning a second carrier supporting a second substrate adjacent to the second platen and wherein engaging a conditioning body with the continuous planarizing pad further comprises contacting the continuous planarizing medium with the conditioning body while the first substrate and the second substrate are in contact with the planarizing pad.

93. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 91, wherein positioning the continuous planarizing pad around a pair of spaced apart rollers further comprises positioning a first carrier supporting a first substrate adjacent to the first platen and positioning a second carrier supporting a second substrate adjacent to the second platen and wherein engaging a conditioning body with the continuous planarizing pad further comprises contacting the continuous planarizing medium with the conditioning body while the first substrate and the second substrate are not in contact with the planarizing pad.

94. (New) The method of claim 85 wherein the first support member is pivotally coupled to a second support member and wherein the moving of the first support member transmitting a force to a force sensor comprises pivoting the first support member so that the first support member compresses the force sensor.

95. (New) The method of claim 85 wherein the first support member comprises a piston and wherein the moving of the first support member transmitting a force to a force sensor comprises moving the piston within a cylinder to alter the pressure within the cylinder.

96. (New) The method of claim 95 wherein the force sensor comprises a pressure transducer.